

THE AMULET

It could have touched
the Queen of Sheba's oiled and attared skin,
a scarab cabochon in beaten gold,
jewel unidentified.

Once, a royal gemsmith thought he saw
the pigeon's blood of rarest ruby as prongs
of light probed its lucent dome. By moonrise
a poet called it Cleopatra's opal, in rain
a star sapphire for Sappho, and at oceanside
a mystic said it was Ho's lost jade.
But it was none of these.

Harder, fairer than diamond, some stranger,
stronger radiance rose from fires
of ancient forces, some overwhelming source,
spectral power unsuspected. Inside
refraction's core, in secret wicks of atoms:
the genesis of hope and something's home...

perhaps always meant to be worn
unnamed
into the unknown darkness.